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ABSTRACT

This paper provides a broad, sweeping glance at the early policies, attitudes, and activities surrounding the education of Native Americans. The Indian education efforts of the colonists--involving civilization, Christianization, and literacy--did little to alter Indian culture and were in most cases abandoned by the mid-1700's. During the Revolutionary War and westward expansion the policy was extermination and relocation of American Indians; education was a low priority. In 1834, Congress created the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). Tribally-operated schools met with some success. By 1841 the Choctaw and Cherokee had bilingual schooling; some tribes reached 90% literacy. In the post-civil war period the Indian education policy was assimilation; the first off-reservation boarding schools were opened with that objective. Departure from assimilation came with the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act, recognizing civil and cultural freedom. Following World War II the Government tried a policy of termination which resulted in the tribes' long-lasting distrust of government and stifled most efforts toward educational betterment. By the mid-sixties, a growing number of Indian people were committed to self-determination in educational matters. Their efforts brought changes, e.g., Indian controlled urban and reservation schools and growing numbers of Indians in universities and professions. Much remains to be changed in Indian education. Real improvement can be expected not from government policy but from those Native Americans determined to control their cultural destiny. (JHZ)

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A GLANCE AT THE EVOLUTION OF NATIVE AMERICAN EDUCATION:
FROM CHRISTIANIZATION TO SELF-DETERMINATION *

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With the steady stream of newcomers onto the North American continent, a need for "educating the natives" was quickly apparent. Education, as defined by the colonizers, was philosophically grounded in the belief that Indians "could not become better Indians; they could only become something else" (McNickle, 1973, p.115). Iverson (1978, pp.150-53) argues that "Formal education programs were initiated from the colonizer's political and economic interests," with education amounting to a "central instrument --an excuse-- to acquire the resources but not the inhabitants of a rich continent." Variations of these same attitudes exist today, although the thrust of Native American education has undergone a number of significant changes. In this paper, I simply try to provide the reader with a broad, sweeping glance at the early policies, attitudes, and activities surrounding the education of the indigenous peoples of the United States.

THE COLONIZATION PERIOD: CHRISTIANIZATION & CIVILIZATION

The period from 1606 -- when the Virginia Company initiated the first recorded attempt at educating North American natives -- to the American Revolution was represented by a wide range of attitudes toward Indian education, each as different as the individual colonies from which they emanated. Jeannette Henry (1972, p. 8) notes that "the differing religious and political leanings and the varying economic interests of the English colonists roughly divided the Indian education program into three parts." These coincide

with our comfortable partitions of the early colonies into Southern, Middle, and New England.

THE SOUTHERN COLONIES

The southern colonies were essentially agricultural, Anglican, and Royalist. As early as 1606, and again in 1609, the Virginia Company issued charters stressing "conversion of Indians" and providing a ten pound note for each Indian boy instructed in a colonist's home. Settlers complained of being unable to get enough boys in a peaceable manner because Indian parents didn't seem to want their sons taken from them. Of those boys who were successfully schooled in this fashion, the most promising were sent to Europe for further study.

By 1617, two charity funds had been established in England for the education of North American Natives. In the same year, King George the First ordered that Henrico College be built in the Virginia Colony for this purpose. Four years later, construction was underway on a second Indian school at Charles City, Virginia, both schools co-funded by the Virginia and the East India Companies. In 1622, however, the schools were destroyed by an Indian people responding to the ever-growing and threatening colonial population. For the next seventy years, education was provided only for children held as slaves or hostages in colonist's homes (the Virginia Assembly, in 1663, allowed 1,200 pounds of tobacco annually for the education of hostage children).

In Georgia and the Carolinas, the education of Native Americans was left to the Anglican missionaries. "None were successful in working with the tribes" (Adams, 1946, p.17), however, and many were killed. Schooling efforts were generally abandoned in the Southern states by 1711. Recurring outbreaks of violence changed the attitudes of even the most tolerant of

southern colonists: the Indian was no longer a pagan in the grip of ignorance, but a person standing proud and fierce in the path of civilization.

THE NEW ENGLAND COLONIES

The religious leanings of the New England colonists shaped their efforts toward Indian education. The Puritans "saw Satanism as the core of Indian life, giving them the choice of saving a victim of Satan or destroying a partisan of Satan" (certainly a no-win situation for the Indian). These religious zealots considered plagues in 1616 and 1617 that decimated one-third of the native population as God-sent, and in 1638, massacred 500 Pequot Indians *in God's name!* Acting with their God's blessing, they set-out to "save" the Indian people with their "Puritan package of theology and pedagogy, including literacy" (Iverson, 1978, pp.154-55).

Free, New England common schools for Indians were established by John Winthrop in 1645, and within ten years, an Indian college was opened in connection with Harvard. Although good-intentioned, the Indian people were not interested in these schools; only eight boys ever attended Harvard and only one ever graduated. In time, the Indian dorm at Harvard was converted to a shop for printing bibles in the Indian tongue.

Although common schooling efforts failed, there were several religious individuals supported by missionary societies who had limited success with Native education. One of these men, John Elliot, looked upon christianity, civilization, and learning as inseparable. He learned the Algonkian language in an attempt to better know (and convert) the Indian people. His work included the creation of Indian Villages -- known as "Indian praying towns" -- which were built by the Indian people. A total of nine of these villages thrived from 1649 - 1675, when they were destroyed in King Philip's War.

THE MIDDLE COLONIES

This area of the new world developed attitudes toward Native Americans which were quite different than those of its neighbors to the north and south. The presence of the Iroquois Federation here led to colonial policies shaped in large part by fear. Missionaries were less-widely accepted and fewer mission schools existed. Some Indian groups did find value in this peculiarly western method of schooling. The Mohawk Tribe, for example, built its own schools and, by 1712, many of their children had learned to read.

In New Jersey, David and John Brainerd organized an Indian settlement near Cranbury "for the purpose of making Indians self-maintaining" (Adams, 1946, p.22). Indian boys were taught to farm and Indian girls to sew and knit. At least three Native American students attended the College of New Jersey --now known as Princeton.

Perhaps the most "successful" group to work at educating North America's indigenous peoples during this period were the Moravians, who established idealized societies in the Pennsylvania wilderness. They practiced their preachings of peaceful co-existence by settling among neighboring Indians, many of whom eventually relocated near or within the Moravian villages. In time, however, Moravian "pacifist convictions and refusal to defend themselves during the colonial war years inevitably interfered with the permanence of their world" (Adams, 1946, p.23).

As the 17th century came to an end, early colonial attempts at education had resulted in a mixture of subjugation, decimation, and westward exodus for most Indian inhabitants of our first colonies. Evelyn Adams (1946, pp. 24-26) summarized Indian education during the colonial period as follows:

Under colonial tutelage, some Indians became literate, some were converted to a new religion, and a few became missionaries. . . . [D]espite two and one half centuries of colonial endeavor to modify Indian culture, the majority of the natives remained untutored in the European sense and their basic economy was unchanged.

Fuchs and Havighurst (1973, p. 3) report that the major educational emphases during the colonial period were civilization and christianization of the natives. "No consistent attempts to incorporate Indian languages, culture, or history were made in the curriculum offered." Indian elders complained that those children who did attend the "white man's schools," returned unfit for tribal life.

THE REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD AND WESTWARD EXPANSION: EXTERMINATION & RELOCATION

By the mid 1700's, educational inroads made in individual colonies were in most cases abandoned.

By the time of the American Revolution, even the Christianization goal had given way to the ideal of a new social order in which the Indians were to be eliminated. A dozen missionaries continued to carry the gospel to the ravaged natives while most American effort went toward their extermination. (Iverson, 1978, p. 156)

During the American Revolutionary War, colonial leaders tried desperately to win the support of Indian tribes. "Ministers and teachers maintained by congressional funds were stationed among the Indians as diplomatic agents" (Adams, 1946, p. 27), and the Continental Congress, soon

after its establishment, appropriated \$500.00 for the education of Indian students at Dartmouth, a sum increased ten-fold within five years (Henry, 1972). In 1776, government Indian commissioners were authorized to send a minister and a blacksmith to the Delaware Tribe, and teachers to the tribes throughout New York. No aid was offered to those tribes in the South who had supported the British.

The new America was weak following its revolution, and although there were few tribes remaining along the eastern seaboard, many western tribes were strong enough to demand respect from the new federal government and were dealt with as sovereign nations. The administration of Native affairs was placed in the hands of the Department of War, and "Education of the tribes was deemed essential in keeping them friendly" (Adams, 1946, p. 29). The War Department left tribal educational matters in the hands of the missionaries, and, as Thompson (1978, p. 4) explains, Indian lands "were partitioned among competing Christian denominations for the twin purposes of Christianization and civilizing the 'savage' 'unsaved' Indian population."

Prior to the war's beginning, the Reverend Eleazer Wheelock had founded Moor's Charity School for Indians in Connecticut, and Dartmouth College in New Hampshire. Wheelock's policy of Indian education differed sharply from that of his earlier religious counterpart John Elliot: Wheelock offered missionary training in boarding schools far removed from the tribal environment. Boys were taught reading, writing, arithmetic, English, Greek, and Latin. Girls lived in neighborhood homes where they learned domestic arts and attended school one day a week to study reading and writing. Moor's Charity School enrolled a maximum of some 150 students.

It was in 1778 that the first of three hundred and eighty-nine treaties between the United States and the Native American tribes was negotiated (with

the Delaware) and signed, with President Washington remarking: "We are greatly gratified with the opportunity of imparting to you all the blessings of civilization" (Forbes, 1964, p. 99). The first treaty to mention education specifically was the 1794 treaty with the Oneida, Tuscarora, and Stockbridge Indians, promising "that teachers would be hired to instruct some young men of the three nations in the arts of the miller and the sawer." Another treaty, with the Kaskaskia in 1803, provided for U. S. contributions of \$100.00 annually, for seven years, to support a priest who would instruct tribal children in literature. It must be understood that while some tribal leaders believed this sort of education valuable, others were vehemently opposed to it and all it represented. Handsome Lake, for example, a Seneca elder, proposed that each tribe send a delegation of two students to white schools to become experts in reading and writing. They would then return to their tribes and become the teachers of others. The great Tecumseh, on the other hand, urged his people "to resist everything European." In general, most tribes continued to quietly resist these educational efforts (Iverson, 1978).

Schooling also offered legislators what seemed to be a perfect solution to the growing problems created by the contrast between the pioneers' needs and those of the Indians. "[T]o those who found practices of outright extermination offensive, education to impose assimilation - to make Indian models of small farmers requiring little land - seemed necessary" (Fuchs & Havighurst, 1973, p. 4). Political representatives were aided in their educative schemes by a growing missionary zeal. Many denominations supported widespread educational efforts in which "the Bible was the primer, and the hoe and plow the weapons of those who sought to 'civilize' the Indians rather than physically eliminate them" (Fuchs & Havighurst, 1973, p. 5).

With an army of proselytizers to do their work, Congress, in 1802,

appropriated \$15,000 annually for this 'spiritual schooling.' "Humanity enjoins us to teach them [Indians] agriculture and the domestic arts," said Thomas Jefferson. This call for vocational education went virtually unheeded as the missionaries, with their government monies, went on Christianizing and civilizing a people who, in large part, were resisting their efforts.

In a continuation of the policy of funding the "educational" work of the missionary societies, Congress passed the Civilization Act of 1819. This act authorized the expenditure of \$10,000 annually for Indian education, one result of which was the building of schools for Native American students. In 1820, the first such school west of the Mississippi was constructed, and by March of 1824, "the Secretary of War reported that there were twenty-one schools and the enrollment was about eight hundred" (Adams, 1946, p. 35).

Though Indian education had always received attention from small groups of christians and politicians, the American people as a whole were caught-up in what has become known as Manifest Destiny. As pioneers pushed westward toward the Mississippi and beyond, America's indigenous population once again seemed to be "in the way." Adams (1946, P. 27) tells us that the government responded with a policy of "shifting . . . Indian populations to meet the changing situation." With the passage of the Removal Act in 1830, tens-of-thousands of Native Americans were eventually rounded up and herded into the newly created Indian Territory, west of the Mississippi. Needless to say, most schooling was suspended during this period.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) was created in 1834 and, the following year, sent Rev. Samuel Parker to gather information that would be useful in planning Indian schools. In time, the Bureau introduced its Indian Education Program, calling for: 1) government and missionary cooperation in adult, practical training; 2) creation of selected tribal schools by the Indian

people themselves; and 3) introduction of the manual labor school. These programs were to be funded by treaty annuities: *no additional monies were provided*. The manual labor schools were boarding schools located among the tribes -- a move which pleased the Indians. Indian students were taught "letters, labor and mechanical arts, and morals and Christianity." However, manual labor was the emphasis - usually in agriculture. The mission schools continued offering academic and moral training and were criticized for their paucity of "practical" training (Adams, 1946, pp. 35-41). Practical training programs for adults were carried on under the direction of "farmer-teachers." These programs were criticized for stressing crop *production* instead of crop production *training* (annual reports told of excellent crop yields while having little to say about Indian training).

Of all these educational efforts, tribal-operated schools proved most successful. By 1841, the Choctaw in Mississippi and the Cherokee in Oklahoma had designed bi-lingual schooling systems. We now know that "The literacy level of Western Oklahoma Cherokee at this time was higher than the surrounding white populations of either Texas or Arkansas" (Thompson, 1978, p. 142). The Choctaws were teaching the "3R's" to both children and adults in seven community schools. *During this period in Native American educational history, some tribes reached a 90% literacy rate!*

No perspective on Native American history would be whole without reference to the decimation of Indian population, economy, and culture during the middle nineteenth century. Wave after wave of westward expansion (spurred by the gold rush of 1849 and the transcontinental railroad connection among other things) dealt a near fatal blow to a people who had yet to recover from the brutality of the Removal Act. White encroachment resulted in Red resistance, and much life was lost. Starvation, disease, and the persistence of

the U. S. Cavalry transformed a proud and once self-sustaining group of peoples into "wards of the federal government." Although never incorporated into any long-continued governmental policy, Washburn (1975, p. 236) contends that extermination *was frequently mentioned*. By 1868, "the once powerful, numerous and haughty tribes [were] reduced to a comparative fraction, and...generally broken in spirit, demoralized, and depending mainly upon the charities of white people" (Forbes, 1964, p. 78).

POST-CIVIL WAR PERIOD: PATRONIZATION & ASSIMILATION

In 1871, the United States Congress stopped making treaties with the Indian peoples and confined them to reservations where "they were to be fed, housed, clothed, and protected" until Congress felt they were able to care for themselves. A "state of welfare dependency ensued" (Fuchs & Havighurst, 1973, p. 5). Those in power had decided that these "wards" were dying-off and that the "Indian problem" would eventually solve itself. During these times, little attention was directed toward Indian education. In 1880, according to Iverson (1978, p. 161), the Board of Indian Commissioners (a presidentially-appointed group) reported that "statistics proved conclusively that the Indian population was not dying out but steadily increasing. They recommended that we make him a safe and useful factor in our body politic."

There were several forces at work during the late nineteenth century which made it a turning point in Indian education. First, separation of church and state became an issue which ultimately put an end to federal subsidies for missionary schooling. Second, the plight of the Indian people was gaining the support of influential, eastern philanthropic groups (known as Friends of Indians). Also, the government began to see the growing Native American

population (existing on forced welfare dependency) as an ever increasing financial burden. As a result, the government assumed *full* responsibility for Indian education. The Board of Indian Commissioners had suggested that "the nation had learned by costly experience that it was cheaper to feed than to fight Indians", and a continuing logic held that "it is cheaper to teach them to feed themselves...". Popular wisdom of the times proclaimed that "it costs less to educate an Indian than to shoot him." Thus, "after a century of unsuccessful attempts to physically obliterate the Indian, rhetoric turned toward destroying 'Indianness'." Although both policies had existed from the onset of Indian education, "emphasis shifted from civilization to assimilation. Arguments now rested more openly on economic grounds than moral grounds" (Iverson, 1978, p. 161). Under full government control, Native American education moved into an era of forced assimilation. Thompson (1978) describes the objective as being "total absorption of Indian youth into the mainstream of American life." (p.5)

A key figure in the government's assimilation policy was Richard Pratt. While in charge of Indian prisoners at Fort Marion, Florida, Pratt observed that, isolated from their historical tribal environments, these Indians adapted to new ways of living and working. Applying this principle to Native American children, Pratt opened the first off-reservation boarding school at Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Indian children were schooled there on the theory that "to civilize an Indian, [we must] put him in the midst of society. Everything Native has to be destroyed, even if the process sometimes meant destroying the Indian himself" (Forbes, 1964, p. 113). Other boarding schools followed, with Carlisle becoming "for better or probably for worse the model for a century of Indian education" (Burnette & Koster, 1974, p. 42).

The BIA established a standard curriculum for all federal boarding schools which stressed systematic habits, punctuality, regular attendance, and

the English language. Upon arrival, children were given "pronouncable names," baths, haircuts, and Anglo clothing. Students from different tribes were grouped together to discourage conversation in their native tongue, and those caught doing so were punished. Runaways were frequent, and in some schools, a sizable part of the education budget was spent retrieving them.

Boarding schools have been criticized heavily. They failed to fulfill their objective of Indian assimilation and were charged with being overly brutal -- vocational reform schools "for those guilty of being born Indian" (Burnette & Koster, 1974, p. 43). Many graduates returned to their tribes only to find themselves harbingers of some emerging sort of culture that did not fit comfortably with that of the red people or that of the white. As David Adams (1975, p. 248) put it: "[I]n the last analysis the boarding schools contributed as much to the disintegration of Indian culture as it did to its transformation."

Passage of the Dawes Act in 1887 (also known as the Allotment Act) was a further step toward assimilation. By breaking-up reservations into 160 acre allotments, Indians would become good farmers on their quarter sections (Schusky, 1970). Education during this period was targeted toward the fulfillment of the federal allotment goals: governmental relief from the "Indian burden" through industrial and agricultural training, and BIA relief from schooling responsibilities through encouraging attendance at state-run public schools. The Dawes Act failed with both.

Policies of the late nineteenth century shaped Native American education virtually to the present (Iverson, 1978). By the turn of the century, the boarding school had reached the crest of its popularity, and "although it began to wane in favor and the bitterest criticism was directed against it, it continued to stand out preeminently in the Federal school system until 1930" (Iverson, 1978, p. 163). Reservation boarding schools, re

"educational almshouses" by BIA Commissioner Francis Leupp (Adams, 1946), were no more educationally effective than their off-reservation counterparts. Although government spending had reached nearly three million dollars annually, neither education nor assimilation seemed to be taking place.

As the twentieth century unfolded, interest in Indian education diminished among philanthropic groups, congressmen, and just about everyone outside of the BIA. Until the 1930's, "Education for citizenship and vocations remained basic . . . policy" (Fuchs and Havighurst, 1973, p. 9). The magnitude of the BIA educational bureaucracy resisted change, and reforms were slow in coming.

EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY: REORGANIZATION & CULTURAL RECOGNITION

"In the early 1920's," Margaret Szasz (1977, pp. 12-13) reports, "federal Indian policy was a notorious example of bureaucratic ineffectiveness, and the possibility of change from within appeared to be hopeless. The time was ripe for reform." Indian rights advocates (one of whom was future Commissioner John Collier) were once again becoming active, and a report by an Indian interest group known as the Committee of One Hundred was released in 1923. Their recommendations in the area of education were noteworthy, but of little consequence. The report did, however, lead the Secretary of the Interior to charge the Brookings Institute with investigating the existing state of Indian educational affairs (Szasz, 1977, p. 17). Their response became known as the Meriam Report.

The Meriam Report represents a truly massive study of Native American schooling which found such common occurrences as the kidnapping of students, institutional drudge work, physical and emotional abuse, and lack of proper

health care services for students. The report condemned off-reservation boarding schools and accepted the ultimate goal of Indian students attending public schools. Despite these indictments, the objectives of Indian education remained unquestioned. "Although sympathetic to Indian participation in the direction of school, its recommendations did not depart from the traditional goal of assimilation of Indians" (Fuchs & Havighurst, 1973, pp. 10-11).

The 1930's represented a major turning point in national Indian policy. Franklin Roosevelt appointed John Collier Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and in 1933 Collier set to work implementing his "Indian New Deal". First came the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 which not only put an end to the Allotment Act but "provided the legislative framework for Collier policies . . . which departed from the forced assimilation policies of the past and provided for the recognition of civil and cultural freedom, and opportunity for the Indians" (Fuchs & Havighurst, 1973, p. 12).

Iverson (1978, p. 171) reports that Collier pushed for a community day school program to be managed by the tribes themselves and aimed at "land and livestock management, community family health, and native arts and literacy." In addition, he appointed two leaders of the Progressive Education movement, W. Carlson Ryan and Willard Beatty, to share the newly created position of Director of Indian Education. Beatty introduced one of the first cross-cultural education programs (in which Indian children would learn to become aware of non-Indian cultural values through the medium of their own culture), believing firmly that the schooling experience should *not* make the student "unfit to return to the tribal life, while failing to fit him for making a living anywhere else" (Szasz, 1977, p. 55).

But the work of Ryan and Beatty met many obstacles. For one, the entire Progressive Education Movement was held suspect by educational essentialists.

Furthermore, despite new programs and new directional thrusts, congressional appropriations, administrative structures, and teaching personnel remained unchanged. And finally, military demands for resources and personnel (these were the years leading up to and including World War II) served to all but halt many of their more "experimental" and innovative programs.

Perhaps one of Collier's more insightful contributions during his tenure was the inclusion of anthropologists on the Bureau of Indian Affairs staff. He considered understanding of the American Indian cultures to be a necessary prerequisite for cross-cultural education. Although his efforts were not seen as widely successful in this regard, cross-cultural programs for Indian Service Teachers became a requirement for employment from that time on (Szasz, 1977).

The most significant educational piece of legislation passed during Collier's term was undoubtedly the Johnson-O'Malley Act. This legislation authorized federal contracts with states for the improvement of the general welfare and education of Indian peoples living on untaxed land. Furthermore, it held the individual states responsible for the education of those Native Americans living within their borders and provided funding for that specific purpose.

Collier and his "Indian New Deal" eventually came under relentless attack. The Senate and House Indian Affairs Committee accused him, in 1944, *of adapting education to the Indians and their way of life!* The legislators felt that Indian people should be adapting to the dominant culture in an effort to become good citizens. Collier's policies (including his educational changes) were seen as contributing factors to the prolongation of the reservation system which produced conflict within a federal government eager to get out of the "business of Indians." These political frictions eventually led

to Collier's resignation in 1945.

THE POST-WORLD WAR II PERIOD: TERMINATION & SELF-DETERMINATION

Following WW II, the United States government attempted to end its complex set of commitments to the tribes, hoping, eventually, to dismantle the reservation system itself. This plan became known as termination.

Termination had a lasting effect on Indian education because it promoted a philosophical return to the values of forced assimilation. Indian peoples viewed termination as an attempt to separate them from their land, and they resisted it vehemently. The termination policy resulted in the permanent distrust, by Native Americans, of all future government policies directed toward their "well-being," despite the fact that termination was officially abandoned (as government policy) in 1958.

Some tribes, however, *were* terminated, accepting cash settlements for their land under the 1946 Indian Claims Commission Act. During this period, the BIA closed schools in Idaho, Michigan, Washington, and Wisconsin, absorbing those students into their respective public school systems.

While most tribes resisted termination, the government continued to push for public school attendance of Indian young people. Nevertheless, government boarding schools continued to operate and were actually expanded to meet increasing enrollments (Fuchs and Havighurst, 1973, p. 13). The termination policy stifled most efforts at educational betterment (unless one believes that more is better, as in *more* boarding schools), making the 1950's a time of little educational progress.

United States Indian policy in the 1950's had a great deal in common with that of the 1890's and was again ripe for the changes which would

accompany the Kennedy administration. This new philosophical shift recognized the rights of Native peoples to participate in and eventually control their own educational destinies. The new Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Philleo Nash, supported the giving of increased responsibilities for tribal affairs --including those of education-- to tribal leaders themselves. Progress in this newest of policy experiments, known as self-determination, was slow, due in part to the bureaucratic nature of the BIA as well as to Indian mistrust of the government's underlying intentions. Task forces appointed in both 1961 and 1966 by the Secretary of the Interior reported that "Concern over termination continued as a major issue for Indians" (Fuchs & Havighurst, 1973, p.15).

By the mid-sixties, there was a growing commitment among Indian people for self-determination in educational matters. This movement was strengthened by a special Senate Sub-Committee Report on Indian Education. Headed by Robert Kennedy until his assassination, then by his brother Ted, the sub-committee "urged increased Indian control over education, a National Indian Board of Education, and an exemplary federal schools system" (Fuchs & Havighurst, 1973, p. 17). President Nixon, in his 1970 Message on Indian Affairs, reaffirmed the government's policy of increasing Indian control in their own affairs. As we have seen from past experiences though, good intentions are often little more than self-serving political rhetoric, and the 1970's tended to support this thesis.

THE 1980'S AND BEYOND

But much *has* changed. No one awaits the disappearance of the indigenous peoples now. Promise of a legitimate education has become

something more than empty words. The past dozen years have brought a small number of truly revolutionary, Indian-controlled urban schools. And though their total remains small, the number of Indian-administered reservation schools is growing. BIA institutions somehow manage to slowly improve while lost in a governmental bureaucracy whose size is beyond comprehension. And public schools continue to struggle to understand and meet the needs of their Native American students. Universities court "minority" Indian students and Native American professional organizations and scholarly publications can be found with relative ease. The best of this change can be attributed to the efforts of an Indian people who have learned to embrace the philosophy of self-determination and work over, under, around, and through the government when necessary.

And while much has changed, much remains to be changed. Federal policies, attitudes, and actions toward the education of this country's "forgotten minority" remain tenuously acceptable at best. Real improvement in Indian education is a doubtful expectation of government policy; it will come, instead, from the labors of The People -- those determined to control their own cultural destiny.

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